

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
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TO USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY

USLO RIYADH PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

USINT HAVANA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PERP, XF, IZ

SUBJECT: DE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN

REF: BAHGDAD 1403

1. JULY 10 NEWSWEEK CARRIED DE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW PRECEDED BY SHORT LEAD-IN ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTING ALLEGED IRAQ-USSR RIFT. NOTING THAT APPARENT IRAQI DISENCHANTMENT WITH NEW SOVIET AGGRESSIVENESS HAD LED TO IRAQI ATTEMPTS TO DIVERSIFY WEAPONS SOURCES AND ESTABLISHED A MORE NON-ALIGNED POSITION, ARTICLE BALANCED REPORT OF IRAQI HARD-LINE STANCE AGAINST MOSCOW WITH MENTION OF IRAQ'S DISINCLINATION TO MOVE INTO THE WESTERN CAMP, AS WELL AS IRAQ'S MAJOR DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. AND MODERATE ARAB GOVERNMENTS.

2. PUBLISHED TEXT OF INTERVIEW CLOSELY PARALLELED THAT OUTLINED IN REFTEL, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SEVERAL OMISSIONS. NEWSWEEK FEATURED SADDAM'S WARNING ON NEW SOVIET AGGRESSIVENESS, AS WELL AS HIS STATEMENT THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT BE SATISFIED UNTIL THE WHOLE WORLD BECOMES COMMUNIST, BUT FAILED TO MENTION THAT HE ALSO SAID CRITICISM OF THE USSR DOES NOT PORTEND CHANGE.

3. NEITHER SADDAM'S WARNING TO THE IRANIANS AND OTHERS ON DHOFAR, NOR HIS REACTION TO QADDAFI'S REVOLUTIONARY PLANS FOR THE GULF APPEARED IN THE INTERVIEW. REFERENCES TO THE CUBANS WERE ALSO DELETED.

4. ON RELATIONS WITH THE U.S., INVERVIEW DID NOT
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ELABORATE AT LENGTH, BUT MERELY NOTED SADDAM'S AGREEMENT THAT MISPERCEPTIONS COULD BE AVOIDED WITH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, AND HIS MENTION OF U.S. MIDDLE EAST POLICY AS AN OBSTACLE TO FURTHER PROGRESS ON THAT SCORE. SADDAM'S DESIRE FOR ACTION FROM THE U.S. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, RATHER THAN WORDS ALSO MADE THE FINAL VERSION.

5. ON IRAQI AID TO EUROPEAN TERRORISTS, SADDAM NOTED PALESTINIANS MIGHT BE TRAINING OTHERS ABROAD, BUT DENIED IRAQI GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN ANY DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES OF THIS NATURE. PUBLISHED TEXT DID NOT ELABORATE FURTHER ON THIS ISSUE.

6. COMMENT: EXCISED PORTIONS REVEAL EITHER NEWSWEEK OR IRAQI RELUCTANCE TO NAME NAMES, AS WELL AS AN ATTEMPT TO SOFT PEDAL THE BUSINESS AS USUAL ASPECT OF IRAQ'S RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS. OMISSION OF SPECIFICS PRODUCED A SOMEWHAT FLAT, TWO-DIMENSIONAL PICTURE OF SADDAM AND IRAQI POLICY, WHICH COULD HAVE BENEFITTED FROM A FULLER RENDITION OF DE BORCHGRAVE'S INTERVIEW. FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE BEING POUCED TO ADDEES. CHRISTOPHER

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